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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/400,428	09/21/1999	NOBUTAKA SHINOHARA	0039-7369-2S	3433
22850	7590	06/09/2004	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			VANDERPUYE, KENNETH N	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	17
		2661		
DATE MAILED: 06/09/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>
	09/400,428	SHINOHARA ET AL.
	<b>Examiner</b> Kenneth N Vanderpuye	<b>Art Unit</b> 2661

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.  
 2a) This action is **FINAL**.                    2b) This action is non-final.  
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 3-5, 7 and 9-24 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) Claim(s) 3-5 and 9-24 is/are allowed.  
 6) Claim(s) 7 is/are rejected.  
 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
     Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
     Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date: ____.  |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date: ____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
|   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.                                    |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hirose(5,740,468) in view of Amano et al.(5,226,012).

With regards to claim 7, Hirose teaches a serial transmission path switching system comprising:

A switch section(Fig. 1B@93) having a plurality of input lines and a plurality of output lines to perform line-switching between input and output lines(Fig. 1B), a plurality of first serial transmission paths connected to the input lines, respectively((Fig. 1@33), input buffers connected to the input side communication devices and terminals of the first serial transmission paths(Fig. 1B, transmission paths from sources are connected to input lines via input buffers) respectively, to equalize transmission signals from said input side communication devices and send the signals to the first serial transmission paths(Fig. 1B@921-92n)

a plurality of second serial transmission paths connected to the input lines, respectively(Fig. 1B, transmission paths leading to destinations are connected to output lines via buffers), output buffers connected to the output side communication devices and terminals of the second serial transmission paths, respectively, to equalize transmission signals from the second serial transmission paths and send the signals to said output side communication devices(Fig. 1B@941-94n). What Hirose fails to teach is wherein said input and output buffers comprise a buffer designated to be compatible with a plurality of transfer rates and having a function of selectively setting a transmission rate in accordance with a connected communication device. This feature is taught by Amano(col. 4 lines 50-55, the buffer memory is capable of using rate information to generate an accumulation value corresponding to the transmission rate). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine Amano with Hirose for the purpose of enabling the buffers in Hirose to adjust their transmission rate to correspond with the data source transmission rate. The motivation being to prevent overflow and underflow.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 3-5, 9-24 are allowed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kenneth N Vanderpuye whose telephone number is 703-308-7828. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F(7:30-5:00) Second Friday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Doug Olms can be reached on 703-305-4703. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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KENNETH VANDERPUYE  
PRIMARY EXAMINER

KNV  
6-7-04